Proper Utilisation of NDF Money

*150. DR. GOPALRAO VITHALRAO PATIL: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that faced with wide dichotomy in the benefits doled out by the Central and State Governments to those killed in the Kargil conflict and the soldiers perishing in Kashmir, the Adjutant General's branch of Army Hqs. moved a proposal to the Ministry of Defence (MoD) asking for parity;

(b) whether Army Officers fear that money from NDF will be used for flood relief, rather than for the benefit of dead soldiers families; and

(c) if so, what precautionary measues have been taken by Government for proper utilisation of NDF money?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) A proposal has been received from Army Headquarters for parity in the amount of ex gratia payable, and other benefits provided from the National Defence Fund, to the next of kin and families of Armed Forces personnel killed in the Kargil conflict and to those killed in other operations.

(b) and (c) Government have no information about apprehensions regardings utilisation of the National Defence Fund. The Fund is utilised for purposes connected with Defence efforts including welfare of the members of the Armed Forces and Para-Military Forces and their dependants.

Modernisation of Assam Police

*151. DR. (SMT.) JOYASREE GOSWAMI MAHANTA: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is fact that Assam Police Force is being modernised with Central assistance;

(b) if so, what is the target date for completion of the modernisation; and

(c) what are the items provided to the State police for such modernisation?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI L.K. ADVANI): (a) to (c) The Central Government has formulated a special scheme, having an outlay of Rs. 285 crores, for modernisation of police forces of North-Eastern States, including Assam. Under this scheme, arms and ammunition, vehicles, communication equipment, etc. are being provided, in kind, to the police forces of the said States. The scheme has been in operation since the year 1997-98 and will continue till the year 2001-2002.

Reserves of diamond and valuable Stones in Raipur

†152. SHRI RAGHAVJI: Will the Minister of MINES AND MINERALS be pleased to state:

(a) what is the approximate reserve of diamond and other valuable stones in Raipur district of Madhya Pradesh;

(b) whether Madhya Pradesh Government has sent any scheme for their mining to the Central Government for approval;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the latest position of above said mining schemes?

THE MINISTER OF MINES AND MINERALS (SHRI NAVEEN PATNAIK): (a) to (d) Geological Survey of India and Director of Mining and Geology, Madhya Pradesh have carried out preliminary exploration to establish diamondiferrous kimberlite pipes in Payalikhand and Bahradih areas in the district of Raipur, M.P. However, these preliminary explorations are not enough to estimate reserves.

No proposal for grant of mining lease for diamond has been received from the State Govt, of Madhya Pradesh and as such, the question of according approval under Section 5(1) of the MM(R&D) Act, 1957 by the Central Govt, does not arise.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.